



Jew-Curious?

Join Rabbi Amichai Lau-Lavie for ALEF-BET, a unique introduction course to Judaism for adults, providing a framework for exploration of post-patriarchal Jewish living in the 21st Century. The online course is open for all seekers of a personal and deeper connection to Jewish life – no prior knowledge required.

The course will be delivered in three units, six sessions in each unit. Sign up for one class, one unit, the whole course, or anything in between. All sessions are online, with the addition of four optional Shabbat dinner learning events, held in person for participants in NYC.

UNIT I "Wisdom" / Nov 2, 2022 – Dec 7, 2022

UNIT II "Soul" / Dec 14, 2022 – Feb 1, 2023

UNIT III "Together" / Feb 8, 2023 – Mar 15, 2023

Single session \$36* - \$60

One Unit \$295* - \$375

Full Course \$575* - \$720

Optional Shabbat Dinner Events \$36* - \$50 for one event / \$100* - \$180 for all three

Sliding scale pricing, per your ability.

*Lab/Shul Partner price

Lab/Shul's ongoing operations rely on multiple revenue streams including this program. Our sliding scale options welcome a more diverse participation. If the cost of this course exceeds your financial capacity, just let us know and we will make it work, with love. Thank you for your generous support.

For additional information contact our Program Manager at ari@labshul.org

18 Conversations

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You're curious about Judaism and what this 3,000 year old constantly evolving tradition has to offer your life?

Welcome

Back by popular demand, Alef-Bet is my everybody-friendly invitation to get to know the basic building blocks of Jewish life, from the ground up. This interactive series of conversational study sessions offers a unique perspective that includes critical, feminist, queer and questioning responses to 3,000 years old Jewish traditions, texts, myths and symbols.

I'm excited to share with you some of the highlights, core concepts, master stories, key figures and top secrets which make Judaism so meaningful today, why it has meant so much to so many generations before us, and how I find it a compelling path towards a life of meaning, mindfulness, creativity and connection - for all.

Each of the 18 concepts chosen to outline this course offer a glimpse into Judaism's emphasis on Wisdom, Soul, and Together: a life of learning, spiritual practice and communal responsibility. This course is open to all seekers regardless of background or beliefs. Curiosity, respect for others, open mind and heart are mostly all that's needed. Each session will be a conversation, encouraging multiple perspectives, inquiries and questions.

Inspiring readings for each week will be assigned ahead of time and other additional learning and in-depth exploration of topics. The group's digital communication and file sharing will be crowdsourced and co-determined once the group is formed.

In addition to our 18 online sessions we will also gather for three Shabbat Dinner Learning Events, held in participants' homes in NYC. During these events we will socialize, deepen friendships, and explore the secret sauce for how Jewish life comes to life around a ritual table. These potluck dinners will be optional for local participants and priced separately.

I look forward to meeting you and going on a meaningful journey together.

-Rabbi Amichai Lau-Lavie

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Rabbi Amichai Lau-Lavie (he/him) is the Founding Spiritual Leader of Lab/Shul NYC and the creator of Sto-rah-telling, Inc. An Israeli-born Jewish educator, writer, and performance artist, he received his rabbinical ordination from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in 2016. Rabbi Amichai is a founding member of the Jewish Emergent Network, serves on the Leadership Council of the New York Jewish Agenda, is a member of the Global Justice Fellowship of the American Jewish World Service, the Advisory Council for the Institute for Jewish Spirituality, an advisor to the Jerusalem Open House, and is a founding faculty member of the Reboot Network.

Rabbi Amichai has been hailed as "an iconoclastic mystic" by Time Out New York, a "rock star" by the New York Times, a "Judaic Pied Piper" by the Denver Westword, a "maverick spiritual leader" by The Times of Israel and "one of the most interesting thinkers in the Jewish world" by the Jewish Week. In June 2017 Rabbi Amichai published the JOY Proposal, offering a new response to the reality of Inter-marriage and taking on a personal position on this issue, including his resignation from the Rabbinical Assembly of the Conservative Movement.

In 2022 Rabbi Amichai began publishing Below the Bible Belt, a daily digital project extended over 42 months, critically queering and re-reading all 929 chapters of the Hebrew Bible.

Amichai is Abba to Alice, Ezra and Cai.



WHERE: Our Zoom Room

WHEN: Wednesdays, 7:00pm- 9:00pm ET

Optional Class Events

Shabbat Dinner Dates: December 2, 2022

February 10, 2023

March 31, 2023

UNIT I “Wisdom”

1. November 2, 2022 // 8 Cheshvan 5783

GO/LECH-LECHA

You Are Here to Talk the Walk

Begin this journey with an Introduction to the art of Jewish storytelling and a close reading of our oldest origin story about going on, going in, and letting go.

2. November 9, 2022 // 15 Cheshvan 5783

CALENDAR/MOED

Mapping the Jewish Year

Overview of the Jewish calendar and its historical evolution from agricultural system to interpersonal tool for private and collective meaning making. Figure out the fasts, feasts and the reason for each season.

3. November 16, 2022 // 22 Cheshvan 5783

SACRED STORY/TORAH

Written + Spoken Body of Knowledge

On the mountain, in public squares, on one foot, in our heads and hearts: What is Torah? What are its origins and how did it evolve into the central sacred Jewish story?

4. November 23, 2022 // 29 Cheshvan 5783

LAW&LEGEND/HALACHA&AGADA

The Legal Fictions of Jewish Life

Laws and legends, hand in hand, inform the Jewish body of behaviors and beliefs. Find out how both traditions evolve and what’s the best approach to fusion and integration.

5. November 30, 2022 // 6 Kislev 5783

ORCHARD/PARDES

Entering the Orchard to Undress Reality

Entering the Pardes, Hebrew for “orchard,” is a poetic term that describes the process of deep learning. Pardes is also an acronym, describing a four-step methodology with which to make sense and meaning of life.

6. December 7, 2022 // 13 Kislev 5783

QUEEN/SHECHINA

Who is She Who Dwells Within?

Jewish theology has developed over centuries and continues to reflect our changing social values and reality. How do our mythical assumptions of the divine continue to mirror and mould who we are in the 21st Century threshold of non-binary post-patriarchy?

UNIT II “Soul”

7. December 14, 2022 // 20 Kislev 5783

WAKE/KAVANA

Start Each Day with Grateful Intention

What’s the first thing on your mind when waking up? Train to treat each day and start your morning with reverence and elegance, purpose and presence, guided by 3,000 year of Jewish liturgy, poetry and folklore.

8. December 21, 2022 // 27 Kislev 5783

SIT/SHIVITI

Sit. Breath. Open your eyes.

A closer look at an obscure psalm, an ancient visual technology, and other Jewish mystical contemplative practices.

9. January 11, 2023 // 18 Tevet 5783

EAT/BARUCH

L’chayim! Before each bite and when done dining

The Jewish anthology of 100+ daily blessings bring more mindfulness, appreciation and an appetite for life lived large and present. How can gastro-judaism nourish your soul?

10. January 18, 2023 // 25 Tevet 5783

POOP/YETZER

Every human hole is holy and we even have a prayers for poop. Explore this and other embodied Jewish traditions that help us celebrate the sacredness of life in every limb, room, moment.

11. January 25, 2023 // 3 Shevat 5783

SLEEP/SHMA

Advanced Pillow talk training, for body, soul and mind.

Exploring Judaism's bedtime ritual as a useful tool to help us ease into sleep, and a portal into the mystical traditions of dreams and other divine mysteries.

12. February 1, 2023 // 10 Shevat 5783

LOVE/V'AHVTA

Begin with Basics

In your heart and on your tongue, in and under the bed, between the lines: One of Judaism's core values is refining the art of loving - self, other, all.

The erotic and embodied meets the mystical meaning of encounter through Biblical, Medieval and contemporary Jewish literature.

UNIT III "Together"

13. February 8, 2023 // 17 Shevat 5783

COMMUNITY/MINYAN

Who's In, Who Counts? The Evolving Norms of Communal Culture

Jewish ritual culture prioritizes communal norms that define public space and collective context. What are the new normals and developing digital dimensions that redefine bonds, boundaries, and borders that divide and/or unite us?

14. February 15, 2023 // 24 Shevat 5783

MAZELTOV/CONGRATULATIONS!

Jewish Lifecycle Celebrations 101

An overview of life cycle moments and the rituals and customs associated with them in Jewish traditions: From birth and coming of age, to weddings and divorce proceedings.

15. February 22, 2023 // 1 Adar 5783

KADDISH/MOURNING

The Jewish Approaches to Death and Dying

Judaism developed powerful and intricate paths to help us deal and heal when death and mourning happens. This closing session will provide an overview of Judaism's key perspective and practices that focus on the end of life.

16. March 1, 2023 // 8 Adar 5783

TZEDEK/JUSTICE

What it Takes to Fix the World

The pursuit of justice as a way to constantly improve the world and be of service is a key element of Jewish life. In a world of so many needs and ways for us to step up, what can we learn from our tradition about the most strategic, sustained and satisfying ways of making our world more just?

17. March 8, 2023 // 15 Adar 5783

LIFE-WRESTLERS/ISRAEL

People, Land, Narrative

What is the origin of Israel as a concept and how does tribal identity shift. Do we still choose to be chosen? We'll explore the history and ongoing evolution of this central and complex concept, finding new meanings for our personal and communal contemporary lives. On the eve of Israel's 70th birthday, we'll celebrate, learn a few key stories about the centrality of the land, the becoming of the state, and discuss our relationship with both concepts.

18. March 15, 2023 // 22 Adar 5783

TIKKUN/TRANSFORMATION

Closing Session

Coming full circle for a wrap up conversation, reflection and celebration.

REGISTER HERE